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ABSTRACT

A project created linkages in Service Delivery Area 12, Clermont and Warren Counties, Ohio, to improve services for welfare recipients. During the project, the original grant seed money of $22,000 grew to more than $220,000 in grants for cooperative programs. In addition, integral, completed linkage treaties were forged between various agencies and educational institutions and the counties. Some recommendations based on the experience of the project included the following: (1) all agencies should be aware of the publication, "Ohio's Future at Work: Action Plan for Accelerating the Modernization of Vocational Education in Ohio"; (2) vocational programs should be organized according to labor market trends; (3) articulation agreements should be made; (4) students should make individual career plans; (5) coordination with other agencies should be pursued; and (6) intake and assessment should be improved. An external evaluation by a consultant used a survey of regular luncheon meeting participants of the coordination program for evaluation input and interviewed five participants. Surveys were given to 30-40 persons; only 10% returned them. The results of the evaluation were overwhelmingly positive. Respondents and the evaluator rated the program as worthwhile, since five of the original seven objectives of the project were met and a sixth objective was in the process of being achieved. The consultant recommended that the network be sustained and that a directory of agencies be developed. (KC)

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Clermont-Warren

SDA #12

Welfare Coordination Grant

Final Report

4-P9-ZR-WE-00

January, 1991

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

This project was supported in whole by federal funds of the Job Training Partnership Act (Public Law 97-300, Section 123) and with approval from the State Education Coordination and Grants Advisory Council in Ohio.

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CLERMONT-WARREN EMPLOYMENT SERVICES NETWORK REPORT PREFACE

The report that follows outlines the successes and frustrations in creating linkages in Service Delivery Area Twelve, Clermont and Warren Counties, Ohio. The two counties are similar--both rural with rapidly growing suburban areas, both with low unemployment rates and amazing economic possibilities. But both are different--Clermont is designated an Appalachian county while Warren is not. Both have varying points of reference and resources. Clermont is tied into the resources of the Greater Cincinnati United Way and Warren is not. During the demonstration period, Clermont was a JOBS county and Warren was not. But in the course of the grant both counties exhibited lots of energy in working together to address common problems.

This Network effort is a tribute to the foresight and efforts of the initiators: the local Boards of Education, Employment and Training Offices, Human Services, U.C.-Clermont College, Vocational Education and Career Centers, and the Private Industry Council. Special Thanks to Dan Stacy, Project Director, Linda Metz and William Wilken, County JOBS Coordinators, and Dr. William Norris, U.C.-Clermont College who authored the original grant proposal, for their continuing encouragement, support, and enthusiasm for the Network.

It is a common belief that success has come in many varied and surprising ways. The original seed money for this grant of $22,000 has allowed the SDA to mobilize, apply for, and receive over $220,000 in monies (a 1,000% return on the original money) for coordinated projects in the past year, namely: An award from JTP Ohio for Systems Building ($85,761), The Clerical Displacement Grant ($12,500), Clermont County Child Care Training and Recruiting Grant (21,000), Warren County Child Care Training and Recruiting Grant ($47,000), and the Ohio Department of Development Demonstration Employment Program which has continued and enhanced Network efforts ($55,000).

These projects do not include integral, completed linkage treaties between ODADAS, Clermont Recovery Center, and Clermont Human Services. Nor the recently initiated JOBS Student Retention Program at U.C.-Clermont College and Clermont Human Services. Treaties are in the works with ODADAS and Warren Human Services, as well as Clermont Human Services, Adult Basic Education, and Consumer Credit Counseling of Greater Cincinnati. Furthermore, the Network has applied for $100,000 from the Ford Foundation to be used at the discretion of Network members. We are now mobilized to address needs and take action as time, money, and opportunity allows. This is very important.

Clermont Warren Employment Services Network

Welfare Coordination Project

SOME RECOMMENDATIONS AND LEARNINGS BASED ON THE EXPERIENCE AND LEARNINGS DURING THE PROJECT.

At this moment, several segments of the employment and training sector, as well as human service agencies, are revamping their mission and operations. It is of value to know what these revisions in one sector mean for another. It seems many are incorporating linkage as a part of the future direction. This can be useful and offer momentum for collaboration, if known before hand and aggressively acted upon.

An example of a plan that should be known by the training and employment community is Ohio's Future at Work: Action Plan for Accelerating the Modernization of Vocational Education in Ohio. The plan offers some new directions that would be of value to all, not just vocational educators. The statement:

---emphasizes students rather than a program.
---stresses the importance of lifelong learning.

1

---accentuates the necessity of collaboration with all elements of the education system.
---dictates deregulation, increased flexibility, and local autonomy.
---necessitates a more stringent and flexible vocational curriculum that better meets the needs of the labor force.
---reinforces coordination with business, industry, labor, community and governmental agencies.
---calls for more efficient use of resources.
---requires systematic professional development of educators.
---dictates incorporation of appropriate modern technology.
---recommends expansions of career education and adult education.

How this direction plays out is relevant not only to the vocational educators but to the broader community. Some of the particulars that should be known to future planners and collaborators are also some suggestions mentioned by Network participants:

---Occupational programs will be organized according to current and projected labor market patterns, including clustering of related occupations to enhance employment opportunities...
---Local courses of study for all vocational programs will address skills in student leadership...employability and balancing work and family.
---A policy audit will be conducted to determine barriers to system collaboration and lifelong learning and to recommend necessary corrective actions.
---Each vocational education planning district (VEPD) will prepare an annual comprehensive vocational education plan per state agency guidelines, developed with input from all involved school districts and community agencies.
---The comprehensive VEPD plan will include articulation agreements, including vertical articulation between secondary and post secondary programs and institutions and horizontal articulation between educational programs.
---A comprehensive and verified employer competency list will be developed and kept current for each vocational program.
---All vocational programs and services will be evaluated by prescribed outcome measures.
---Each student will have an individual career plan that is based on assessments of interests, aptitudes, abilities, and achievement and that will be used to advise students regarding career path and course selection (by the 8th grade).
---Each completer of a vocational program will have an individual career passport that enables him or her to pursue work and/or lifelong learning and that includes items such as documentation of work and/or community experiences; student profile establishing performance or competency levels; student achievement levels; leadership experiences; attendance records; and an outline of continuing education

needs; and career credentialing.
---All students enrolling in high school secondary education will enroll in a vocational education program, a college preparatory program, or a combination of the two as delineated by their individual career plans.
---Programs will be disinvested that do not represent or address current labor market demands and prescribed student and program outcomes.
---The comprehensive VEPD plan will include cooperative agreements with business, industry, and labor that outline such areas such as shared resources, student work-related experiences and placement, advisory committees, technical development, and verification of competancies.
---Coordination with agencies related to employment, training, and education such as JTPA, human services, rehabilitation, and corrections, community based organizations, and vocational rehabilitation will be included in local and state planning activities.

To initiate such an ambitious plan and make it not just a paper dragon on the local level, each education, employment, and training entity needs to know the VEPD aims, take personal initiative in giving feedback back to the VEPD, and flesh out such directives with collaborative action. Of course, the local Vocational and Career Training district is responsible in engaging the relevant agencies in the process to make it work.

Effective collaboration and coordination entails four levels:

1. The Sharing of Information and Notification of Proposed Action--the simplest, easiest, and most elemental of the steps between agencies wishing to work together. Data and ideas are shared, mutual problems discussed, proposed or actual programs are outlined. When different agencies get together to write cooperative grants this is where it begins.

2. The Regular Exchange of Ideas--A regular process or system is set up so that agencies have the important opportunity to share information about what's new and address mutual concerns. In Warren County this is done through the Inter-agency Council which meets quarterly. In Clermont it is done through the Human Services Council which meets monthly. In the SDA 12 of Clermont-Warren, this has been done monthly through the Network Luncheons. This requires more commitment than stage 1 and a more established link of communication. It is best done when a lead agency or individual is designated in a community to do this and usually will not happen if such a responsibility is not designated.

3. Consultation--entails more commitment than the first two

stages because agencies seek each other's advice and/or endorsement for proposals or actions. Not as demanding as stage 4 because one agency retains sole control and responsibility for planning and implementation. Such coordination can be found in local Private Industry Council (PIC) consultations.

4. Shared Control---the most demanding stage since action is predicated on agencies agreement of participation in planning, facilitating, administration, and implementation of program outcomes. It is the most difficult type of coordination/linkage effort to pull off since it demands that individual agencies yield some of their accustomed control or autonomy over to the linkage effort and group. Because it is the most difficult it demands a lot of patience and creativity on the part of the participating agencies to succeed. This is not the "comfort zone" for most of the agencies since it applies a totally different system of operation.

The present Employment Services Network has evolved into such Shared Control Linkage with the procurement of the Employment Opportunities Demonstration Project funded by the Ohio Department of Development to continue, enhance, and expand the present Network effort in Clermont County. The participants are U.C.-Clermont College, Clermont County Board of Education, Employment and Training, Chamber of Commerce, Human Services (JOBS), Ohio Bureau of Employment Services and U.S. Grant Joint Vocational School. The DOD grant proposal is enclosed. Results of this effort will be known in September and forwarded on to the DOD.

Effective collaboration identifies outcome in terms of what is best for clients and thus outcome related.

When approaching strategic planning among agencies it is good to remember the Japanese proverb, "It is best not to leap a deep chasm in two bounds."---Be thorough before you begin.

When establishing treaties of cooperation among agencies it it is important to keep in mind:
--open discussion directed toward mutual understanding is a critical first step towards collaboration.

--to deal with past negative experiences of collaboration which have left a residue on present collaborative efforts. This may seem unimportant and like a `hot potato' to some, but if this task is left unattended it will make success unlikely and the process of linking together will be filled with mysterious and confusing messages.

--Before collaboration, identify and review the areas in which different rules and operating procedures across the two systems may impede cooperation.

--Deal with the basic assumptions that each agency brings to the process of service delivery, that is: who will do what, when, and with what resources, namely and importantly, money. This should be done before the actual service delivery begins. Contracts need to be carefully reviewed by each agency participant, not only for what they say but for what they do not--these later gaps can cause frustration and misunderstanding which can stagnate the effort and delay the implementation of the process.

---A group of individuals from each collaborating agency should be established and empowered, during the collaboration, to deal with questions and assumptions of allocations of resources and delivery of services while the process is happening.

---Before interagency collaboration involving stage three or four, it is helpful to make a flow chart of the client through the maze of the system(s) so that all understand the process, responsibilities and outcomes intended. What will be done and who will do what, especially when the foreseen and the unforeseen barriers and detours arise.

Some other suggestions:

---Head Start in Kansas secured funds from different agencies to extend their hours to 6PM and lower their age to three. Through grants and agency participation this could be explored in our area.

---Capitalize on redefined agency missions that now include linkage efforts as part of their overall plan. Agencies in an SDA should know which agencies these are.

---Caution must be used in seeing the JOBS initiative as the goose that lays the golden egg. JOBS is mandated to coordinate with local JTPA, OBES, Education, Day Care entities, etc. but cannot contract for and pay for services that were provided free previously.

---Include and inform all people in your system of their importance and successes. In the Human Services JOBS programs, for instance, this would entail consistent and steady contact with Income Maintenance workers who refer to JOBS. Support and show their importance, give them follow up on their referrals, occasional thank you's wouldn't hurt. Same with your placement assistants, work site and educational placements.

---A periodic review of the language and tone of letters sent to human services mandated programs is in order. Using words like sanctions, assessments, etc. often are unintelligible, demotivating, threatening, or abusive. If assessments show that

many people who need jobs are below 6th grade reading level why persist in sending out letters written above that level. Individual counties know what level their assessments show. It is important to target below that average without demeaning. Approach it as a business would market a new service. An assessment could be called a "skills inventory" or the like.

---Orientation and Assessment personnel can be helped and can do without the hostility sometimes engendered in Orientation sessions. Three letters might need to be written. The first announcing the benefits and features of the JOBS opportunity, a friendly reminder and invitation to some valuable services. This is an outreach letter which must spark a dream. This would garner and identify your motivated JOBS participants. For those who didn't show a second "good news/bad news" letter could have a "you missed it" tone, stating some others came and looked what they received. A third letter could then be more direct with a "We're not kidding" tone. This is what business does when you miss a billing or subscription payment.

---Intake, counselling and assessment must help clients focus on their dream. This has to be tempered by what is available by the local labor market situation and training programs available. However it is exciting that counselors are encouraged to expand the dream while focusing it. A friend of theirs might be a successful hair dresser and the client could be a good one also, but the client deserves to know all the options they have at their disposal and talents. Non-traditional occupations for women are sometimes the only way some can make a living wage. There are different programs in the area that specifically mentor and support non-traditional education for women, namely Great Oaks.

---The Ohio Department of Administrative Services, Division of Equal Employment Opportunity, has a service to assist minorities and females in obtaining employment with State contractors. (614) 466-8380. Fields include plumbing, art-glass, carpentry, masonry, millwrights, etc.

---Day care providers need to be actively recruited and trained, and importantly, sustained and mentored. The average work life expectancy of a day care provider is 18 months. Support systems for day care providers can lengthen this. Incentives and an increase in pay for certified child care providers is needed to foster retention and quality in this field which is so pivotal to effective service delivery. It is easier and cheaper to keep them than to get them, screen them, train them, process and monitor new recruits. Agreements with local latchkey programs in operation must be aggressively pursued. Local linkages with Head Start programs are encouraging and need to be sustained.

---Agencies should be aware of local grant resources available at

the Cincinnati Public Library, Grants Resource Center. Offers two free seminars monthly, Introduction to Grants Research and Introduction to Proposal Writing. Need reservations by calling 369-6940. While funding in the normal channels from the state seem to be dwindling for many programs, funding through grants is readily available. Those agencies who work together on RFP's and those who have a track record for inter-agency linkages will have the inside track. This has been borne out in the Network's history. Ability to mobilize as a Network has been a plus.

---One stop shopping where A.B.E., Literacy Training, Vocational Classes, and Day Care is all available should be encouraged. Consolidation of services in areas of most need and with lack of transportation should be addressed.

---Barriers to Employment have to be dealt with and counties and agencies should be mobilized on four levels:
1. Personal Barriers---low self-esteem, lack of skill, illiteracy, health, teenage pregnancy, etc.
2. Community Barriers---lack of transportation, day care for evening adult education and especially for entry type jobs which are often split or second and third shift, etc.
3. Employers' Barriers---the bottom line rules, prejudice towards the welfare recipient, hiring of part-time workers so that benefits can be omitted, entry level positions are minimum wage which encourages a demotivated working poor class, 77% of future job market will need education over and above high school, etc.
4. Health Care Barriers---35 million Americans don't have it and business doesn't offer it to part-time workers, entry level and others, cost is prohibitive, and the lack of it keeps people on Medicaid.

---The Chamber of Commerce, Private Industry Council, OBES, JTPA, JOBS, and other involved agencies should periodically award area employers who have been successfully involved in employment and training services. The Reverse Job Fairs outlined in the Department of Development Demonstration Employment Opportunities Program would be an appropriate forum to do this.

---Clermont Chamber of Commerce 2001 Committee type initiatives studying county infrastructure should be encouraged and followed with on-going action plans to address the four barriers outlined above.

---1 in 10 Ohioans have no health insurance. The uninsured in Ohio include nearly 200,000 children under the age of 6, or nearly 20% of all Ohio children in that age range. 900,000 Ohioans have jobs but no health insurance according to the Ohio Department of Insurance's Health Insurance Task Force Report (Nov., 1990) There is not much motivation for an ADC client with children to leave the welfare system and Medicaid for a minimum wage job and no benefits. A wage of $7 or $8 an hour would be

necessary in such a situation.

---Mentoring and support group type activities, for example U.C.-Clermont College Student Retention Program and the H.O.M.E. (Helping Ourself Means Education) Program, for clients transitioning from welfare and/or training to self-sufficiency should be increased and encouraged. Agencies with varied interests could bring an array of supportive services to such groups.

---Clermont County has a "Clermont Cares" telephone number (732-7300) for those dealing with the system and having problems. It addresses the issue within a week.

---Explore possibilities that Head Start teachers and facilities can be used by JOBS participants at night and summer when programs are not operating.

---Agencies should be more conscientious in getting information of proposed or commenced programs to other agencies that would benefit or be interested. Some felt they had to find out about things in the paper.

---One agency in each county should be entrusted with keeping up to date information on agencies and their services and eligibility requirements. Agencies should offer any modifications of this information in a timely manner to this agency. Local on-line workers, intake, income maintenance, counselors, etc. should have access to updated services and listings. Perhaps the main coordinating agency could have a subscription service that would ensure that this happens. Samples of the most up-to-date and recent listings of agency resources are enclosed.

---Agencies should know that the completely revised and updated Directory of Community Services published by the United Way of Greater Cincinnati is now available for $50. Also available in software form for $50. (Call 721-7900) All agencies in Hamilton, Butler, Clermont, Brown, and Northern Kentucky are listed. Unfortunately, Warren County is not listed. However, Information and Referral of Warren County (Community Services) does have its own flyer and listings available.

---Local OBES and some vocational schools are tied into, by computer, the Ohio Career Information System which allows individuals to clarify career inclinations and interests. It also supplies information on local educational and financial sources according to that particular interest. It is a useful tool for those wishing to get a career direction and basically under utilized.

---An excellent guide for agencies and clients outlining human services programs and eligibility requirements is Guide to Assistance Programs in Ohio put out by the Ohio Hunger Task Force, 80 S. Sixth Street, Columbus, OH 43215, 1-800-227-6446. Updated periodically. New one will be out April or May, 1991.

---Those who work in public agencies should periodically fill out and deal with the forms their agency generates to get a feel for the bureaucracy as it impacts people seeking services. New workers definitely need this as part of their orientation. The standard form took the Network Coordinator almost two hours to fill out and he has a Masters and he lied! It seems that different agency concerns can generate one or more new questions on forms, which create two or more regulations, which generate three or four revisions of the regulations, which ripple into five or six more steps in the process. It is no wonder that agency workers are confused and participants and workers alike are frustrated. A footnote on this: it has been noted that because of an unwieldy and clumsy reimbursement system vendors of supportive services to Human Service clients have waited months to receive their checks. Also Human Services personnel on business assignments have waited months to get reimbursed for personal expenditures in Clermont County, some with expenditures now totalling over $500.

---Incentives to involve business and industry in job-work programs such as Targeted Jobs Tax Credits, OJT, Subsidized Employment Programs, etc. are defused and demotivating as a potent force for change by paperwork. They know they can get tax credits and wage subsidies but they're not interested--"it's just too damn complicated." Frisch's Restaurants, a large user of Targeted Jobs Tax Credits in our area is reported to have hired a person to deal with the paperwork.

---Project Leap personnel need to encourage linkages and expansion with other teenage pregnancy prevention and support programs such as GRADS, TAPP in Warren County and SUMA in Clermont County.

---Any other SDA interested in replicating this Network should not hesitate. It is believed funding is out there in the State or locally, or even among the agencies to pull it off. A county or counties can start slow with their own resources and at their own pace. However, it is helpful to have a salaried Network Coordinator who is neutral and objective to facilitate the process. This Network was administered from a part-time position. There are plenty of qualified people out there who for various reasons don't mind or want to work part-time.

EXTERNAL EVALUATION

OF

THE CLERMONT-WARREN

EMPLOYMENT SERVICES NETWORK

BY

MICHAEL BERRY
CONSULTANT

DECEMBER 19, 1990

INTRODUCTION

The following is an independent, external evaluation of the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network. The network has proven to be a viable, positive, relatively inexpensive way of dispensing information; assisting colleagues; promoting good will; sustaining morale; and, most importantly, helping clients. The evaluation consists of a brief background summary, a description of the method of evaluation, the results, a few recommendations, and a brief conclusion. Also included is an appendix which reveals individual responses from the evaluation form the consultant devised and responses from the interviews he conducted.

BACKGROUND

In January of 1990, the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network was implemented. The objectives of the program are as follows:

1. To have representatives of education, employment, and supportive services meet monthly at a luncheon meeting to develop a cohesive, cooperating Employment Services Network.
2. To identify and acquire information on our SDA's organizations and agencies of potential support to clients.
3. To enhance cross-agency referrals.
4. To reduce duplication of services and maximize community resources.
5. To identify barriers to and gaps in services.

6. To create an on-going multiagency information and training forum for various agencies' staff.
7. To provide a comprehensive description and report on activities and results through self-evaluation by project participants and an evaluation by an external consultant (Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network Grant Project Abstract, October, 1989).

The external consultant was hired in November of 1990 to provide an objective evaluation of the program. The consultant (Michael Berry, Director of Educational Talent Search at Northern Kentucky University) attended the November luncheon meeting, conducted a survey of regular participants, and personally interviewed five attendees of the luncheon meeting. The following report contains his method of evaluation, the results he obtained, and his recommendations.

METHOD OF EVALUATION

The October, 1989, description of the project states on page 12, "An external consultant will conduct an interview with each agency's representative to discuss perceptions and recommendations for the program." The consultant and the network coordinator determined that all of the interviews did not have to be personal so the consultant developed an evaluation form which he distributed at the luncheon meeting on November 27, 1990. He explained the purpose of the

evaluation and asked the 30-40 attendees to complete the form. The forms were to be given to him at the conclusion of the meeting or mailed to the network coordinator's office later. While he was at the meeting, the consultant had the opportunity to talk one-on-one with a number of network participants. He specifically interviewed five participants, three being from Clermont County and two from Warren County. Two of these five were from county Departments of Human Services, two were from Employment and Training Centers, and one was from a county Office of Education.

The evaluation form the consultant developed was based on the seven program objectives which are listed on page 1 of this report. The questions he asked the participants were designed to be open-ended and contained space for comments. A copy of this evaluation form can be found on page four.

The five individuals the consultant interviewed were all asked the following questions:

1. How would you describe the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network?
2. What impact has the program had on your agency?
3. What are the program's strong and weak points?
4. What, if anything, would you change about the program?
5. How successful has the program been?

Based upon the returned evaluation forms; the individual interviews; the information he acquired from attending the

JOBS TRAINING PROGRAM EVALUATION

Your comments on our program are appreciated. If you need more room, feel free to use the back of this page or attach a separate sheet of paper.

1. How effective was the enhancement of cross-agency referrals?

2. How effective has the reduction of duplication of services been?

3. To what extent have community resources been utilized?

4. What barriers to service and gaps in service have been identified?

5. How effective has the ongoing multiagency information and training forum for agencies' staff been?

6. What outcomes, if any, did you find surprising or unexpected?

Overall comments:

luncheon and talking with attendees other than the five he specifically interviewed; and the information provided in the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network Grant Project Abstract October, 1989 and an additional grant proposal submitted in September of 1990 for a systems building effort (which described the network at midpoint in some detail), the consultant was able to evaluate the program from a distance, free from the bias that working within the network might produce.

The rate of return on the evaluation forms was disappointing with only about ten percent of the attendees responding. Perhaps if they had been given more time to complete the evaluations at the conclusion of the meeting, or, if they had been given postage-paid return envelopes, the rate of return would have been better.

The individuals he interviewed were regular attendees and represented a cross section of the network participants. Two of them had been asked by the network coordinator to speak with the consultant and three others agreed to speak with the consultant at his invitation. During the course of the luncheon meeting the consultant was able to talk randomly with additional network participants. Several of them had attended all or most of the luncheon meetings. A few of them were relatively new to the network having only attended one or two meetings. Two of them had just begun working at their respective agencies during the month of November and

and this was their first meeting.

The two documents the consultant had access to were helpful: the October, 1989, abstract providing a concept of what the network ideally should be and the September 1990 proposal giving a portrait of what actually had transpired through July, 1990. The latter document lists over thirty agencies which have been represented regularly at the luncheon meetings. It also indicates the number of attendees grew from 24 in January to 35 in July with a high of 37 in May. There were well over 30 participants at the luncheon meeting the consultant attended.

RESULTS

The results of the evaluation are overwhelmingly positive. Those who provided feedback feel the program is worthwhile. They view it as extremely helpful to their roles as service providers. The responses to the evaluation form and the questions asked during the individual interviews are located in the Appendix of this report.

It is the consultant's opinion that these people are correct in their assessment; the program is indeed worthwhile. "Worthwhile" is, of course, subjective. Looking at the network objectively, one can see that nearly all of the original seven objectives have been met and/or exceeded. The first five objectives have been achieved. A "cohesive, cooperating, Employment Services Network" has been developed and it has been quite successful in its efforts "to identify

and acquire information on our SDA's organizations and agencies of potential support to clients," "to identify barriers to and gaps in services," and it has enhanced "cross agency referrals" also. The network reports, through the coordinated use of resources, have shown an increase in wages for welfare clients, and an increase in welfare recipients enrolled in Title II A. In these areas (Objectives 1, 2, 3, and 5), the objectives have been met and exceeded. According to the participants' feedback and the observations made by the consultant, Objective 4, "To reduce duplication of services and maximize community resources," has been met to some extent, but there seems to be a long way to go before community services are maximized. This is not to say there are community services that are not being used. But there are some to whom appropriate clients are not always referred, or referred too late to be of much help. New resources have been discovered by some network participants, and many of the resources are now being used much more effectively than they were before the network was developed. So, while the objective has been achieved, there is still room to continue.

Objective 6 seems to be the area of greatest disappointment. It seems that the desire "to create an on-going multiagency information and training forum for various agencies' staff" may die for lack of continued funding. The network, originally funded for one year, and bolstered by in-kind

donations, will cease to exist after August, 1991. It is possible and even probable that the luncheon meetings and networking could continue (perhaps on a more limited basis) with the support of the participating agencies. Should the network survive and continue to function, then this Objective also will have been met. In time this question will be answered.

Objective 7 is in the process of being achieved. A comprehensive report, of which this evaluation will be a part, will be completed in early 1991. So, there is a good chance that, in time, all of the objectives will have been met.

In the consultant's view, the idea of lunch-time meetings was a good one. When scheduled far enough ahead of time, these are convenient for most participants. The location, Bethesda North Hospital, is also convenient. The presentation topics such as "Orientation to Network," "Day Care," "Vocational Schools," "U.C. - Clermont College," "County Transportation," "J.O.B.S. Contracting," and "Hiring Welfare Recipients" are ones that appeal to a broad base of the network participants and provided them with information that was not always readily available. By definition, networking should enhance cross-agency referrals, and the congenial atmosphere of the lunch-time gathering provided opportunities for business card exchanges and other informal information exchanges. Many participants remained after the meetings to meet newcomers,

have questions answered, or hold small group discussions. The luncheon the consultant attended ended with a number of the Clermont participants holding a meeting just because they were all there together.

This is what networking is all about. And, as a network, this one is a success. Indications are that service duplications will continue to be reduced and more and more community resources will be utilized as more information about these services and resources is made available. Barriers to and gaps in services will continue to be identified and many of the barriers will be overcome and the gaps will be filled. These will continue to happen even if the network itself as a formal unit of information exchange, fails to survive. This is because the momentum has been established so that an informal network, perhaps through telephoning, will continue. It will continue because it works and people want it.

There have, of course, been some weak points. It appears that the start up of the program was slow and it took several months for "the word" to get out. The marketing of the network could have been stronger at the beginning. Interestingly enough, the topic of the luncheon the consultant attended was "How to Generate Support and Money for Your Program Through Marketing." Nearly 70 agencies and institutions are in the network but only about half of them actively participate in it. More people should have been

involved.

It is hoped that some reports and written information will come out of this networking. One participant, Sue Wettstein of the Employment and Training Center of Clermont County, suggested a reference of agencies and their services be published. The consultant agrees and believes the network should be the obvious publisher for such a document with several volunteers compiling information. It could be printed quite cheaply through desk-top publishing.

The strong points of the network far outweigh the weak ones. The consultant sees the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network as a viable, positive, relatively inexpensive way of dispensing information; assisting colleagues; promoting good will; sustaining morale; and, most importantly, helping clients. The comments, both written and oral, that the consultant received from the service providers bear this out. It has accomplished and, in most cases, exceeded its goals.

RECOMMENDATIONS

The primary recommendation the consultant has is to sustain the network. It seems that even if funding for the coordinator's salary and all other funding for that matter, were to disappear, an organization of interested and dedicated agencies could be formed to keep the purpose and spirit of the network alive. Each participating agency could take responsibility for organizing one monthly meeting, providing a lunch, and arranging for a speaker. If fairly

organized, each agency would be responsible for organizing a program on the average of once every three years. Costs could be minimized by encouraging participants to "brown bag it." In this way the meetings, the training, the fellowship, and the information exchange, could all continue on a limited, but still effective basis.

Another recommendation is to begin publishing not only a directory of agencies, services, and contact persons, but also a type of monthly newsletter that would reflect highlights of the presentation from the previous month and list grant information and other announcements made at the meeting. The consultant feels that if this newsletter were sent to all service providers in both counties, those who do not regularly attend might make more of an effort to attend since they will be able to see what they are missing. He believes that it would become an effective marketing tool, and, though some may question why they should bother to attend when they are provided the most important information anyway, it will inspire others to make more of an effort to begin attending. But even if attendance does not increase, more information will be dispensed and this, after all, is one of the network's primary objectives.

CONCLUSION

The grant proposal submitted in September, 1990, states, "The luncheons have allowed agencies and their representatives to put a name and face together; meet in friendship, share

resources, problems, ideas, RFP's; and grapple with issues that affect all that are involved in the human service sector. Many of the partnerships and coalitions have evolved out of these meetings. New efforts are constantly engendered and new members are invited monthly and introduced." The consultant concurs with this assessment. The network has worked out well for everyone: directors, other agency personnel, and clients. People are being helped; the people who are helping them are doing better jobs. It is the opinion of the consultant that this program has accomplished its goals and exceeded most of them.

APPENDICES

A. Comments by Interviewees
B. Comments from Evaluation Forms

A. COMMENTS BY INTERVIEWEES

1. How would you describe the Clermont-Warren Employment Services Network?

Grown pleasingly so. Started with 15, now around 30-40, has led to other grants - an economic development grant. Plan to continue the network.

Wanted to bring together government and non-profit agencies and interested parties to find out who does what to whom, find commonalities; by cooperating, they can do more.

Doing away with a lot of duplication. Saves money. Good way to advertize.

Good for Warren which isn't a JOBS county. Good form.

Accomplished outcome of getting to know what everyone does. Find out about other programs, easy to link, good for meeting deadlines.

2. What impact has this program had on your agency?

Mark Paduk wrote grant for incentive funds of $50,000. We coordinate with the Welfare agency.

Serving more clients than ever before: 300-1300 in three years, more dollars, education component of JOBS program: 13-21 sites.

Knowledge - where to go, where to refer clients, good networking.

Another grant for clerical displacement, network with vocational school and JTPA. Learned about state activities in Columbus.

Systems building grant. Welfare getting served through JOBS and JTPA.

3. What are the program's strong and weak points?
Strong

Cooperation and communication.

Ongoing, monthly activity - not one shot, feed people.

Networking, cohesive group, people stick around after meeting. Not a group of voting members - other members of agency can attend.

No competition.

Weak

Need to put down in written format a reference of agencies.

Raised awareness but didn't involve everyone we hoped to involve. Would like to put together a training package for other employees.

None.

Frustrations with coordination and time.

Time frame - late start.

4. What, if anything, would you change about the program?

Maybe more marketing.

Would like to have started training sessions for other employees.

More time with coordinator for assistance with grant writing.

Keep it going. Perhaps not have one person in charge, not make it too structured.

More central location for Mark.

5. How successful has the program been?

Tremendously successful.

Very - not sure it accomplished every goal, but it has accomplished a great deal.

Exceedingly successful, good information for grants.

Extremely - benefits everyone.

Gave JOBS program ability areas not being served such as Board of Education Learning Lab.

B. COMMENTS FROM EVALUATION FORMS

1. How effective was the enhancement of cross-agency referrals?

Extremely effective!

I think we are yet to see this - this is being built in and is very exciting.

The Clermont County Board of Education is the A.B.E./G.E.D. provider for Clermont County. The referrals and cooperation of efforts that had been initiated from this network have been great for our program and our clients. I truly believe we can and do serve the whole person through the cooperation of agencies.

2. How effective has the reduction of duplication of services been?

Modest.

Very.

Rather than each agency trying to do everything to its clientele, we now think about how we can get other services through agency cooperation.

3. To what extent have community resources been utilized?

Quite successful - new resources seem to appear each month.

The referral system is excellent.

To the extent that community resources are the people who work in the agencies, we are using those resources much more effectively than before the creation of the network.

4. What barriers to service and gaps in service have been identified?

Transportation (especially in Clermont); day care - but due to the network we're beginning to address this.

I'm not sure, but because of these meetings, I've become more aware of ways to help my clients.

One barrier was that "we", the agencies, did not know what each other did or could do. The network has greatly improved

each of our knowledge bases.

5. How effective has the ongoing multiagency information and training forum for agencies' staff been?

Highly useful.

I think it has been very helpful.

This has been the major impact part of the network. The ongoing meetings and sharing have perpetuated the grants objectives.

6. What outcomes, if any, did you find surprising or unexpected?

The power of networking to write proposals - it has brought over $500,000 additional into the counties.

How much more I can help my clients.

7. Overall comments:

Fred Alverson's words of praise were based on statewide experiences, and I agree.

Great - this has been a great help to me being new in my position.

The network has been very positive to our program and for our clients.